

Again, studies have shown that students, I would say rural students, minority students and disadvantaged students, certainly learn better when they have more teachers, more time, and they certainly learn better as other students learn well when they have a good environment.

Mr. Speaker, the education bill being proposed by the President is not only good for urban areas and suburban areas, but also very good for rural areas. Rural North Carolina and the children in North Carolina would benefit from that.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time previously allotted to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Pennsylvania?

There was no objection.

#### CHINESE HOUSE CHURCH APPEAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, I want to put domestic concerns and partisan concerns aside and speak for five minutes on behalf of the fundamental human right of religious liberty in the House Churches in China.

Recently a number of House Church leaders in China wrote a very respectful appeal to the government of the People's Republic of China. The appeal says nothing against the Chinese Government, but reflects the utmost respect. These House Church leaders respectfully request that their government release those Christians imprisoned in labor reform camps and to stop attacks on the church. In addition, the authors request that the PRC begin a dialogue with the House Church leaders in order to deepen mutual understanding and to reduce confrontation between the two parties.

Mr. Speaker, the House Church leaders who drafted this document and who sent it to Beijing have taken a very bold and possibly dangerous step in hoping for recognition from their government. I encourage the Chinese Government to take steps to increase religious liberty for the Chinese people, to use caution in these matters, and to deal justly with issues of religious freedom. It is vital that Americans support these courageous House Church leaders and members as they appeal to the Chi-

nese Government for protection of their religious freedom.

I would like to read the House Church appeal which has seven points to it for the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. It is entitled "a united appeal by the various branches of the Chinese House Church."

One: We call on the government to admit to God's great power and to seriously study today's new trends in the development of Christianity. The government should realize if it were not for the work of God, why would so many churches and Christians be raised up in China? Therefore, the judicial system in the People's Congress and the United Front System should readjust their policies and regulations on religion lest they violate God's will to their own detriment.

Two: We call on the legal authorities to release unconditionally all House Church Christians presently serving in Labor Reform Camps. These include Presbyterians who believe that if one is saved once he or she is saved always; Charismatic Church; Local Church, incorrectly called Shouters Sect; the Way of Life Church, also called the Full Scope Church; the Pentecostal Church; Lutherans who do not attend the Three-Self Churches; and the Baptist Church. They should be released from prison if they are orthodox Christians, as recognized by Christian churches internationally, and have been imprisoned for the sake of the gospel.

Three: There are approximately 10 million believers in the Three-Self Church but 80 million believers in the House Church. The House Church represents the mainstream Christianity in China. Therefore, the government should face reality as it is. If Taiwan with its population of 22 million cannot represent China, but the mainland can with its population of 1.2 billion, likewise the Three-Self Church cannot represent the Chinese Christian Church. The Three-Self Church is only a branch. Moreover, in many spiritual matters there is serious deviation in the Three-Self Church. The government should clearly understand this.

Four: We call on the central leadership of the Chinese Communist Party to begin a dialogue with representatives of the House Church in order to achieve better mutual understanding, to seek reconciliation, to reduce confrontation, and to engage in positive interaction.

Five: We call on the government to spell out the definition of a "cult." The definition should be according to internationally recognized standards and not according to whether or not people join the Three-Self.

Six: We call on the legal authorities to end their attack on the Chinese House Church. History has proven that attacks on Christians who fervently preach the Gospel only bring harm to China and its government. Therefore, the legal system should end its practice of arresting and imprisoning House Church preachers and believers, confining them in labor camps, or imposing fines as a punishment.

Seven: The Chinese House Church is the channel through which God's blessing comes to China. The persecution of God's children has blocked this channel of blessing. Support of the House Church will certainly bring God's blessing.

We hope the government will have a positive response though this united appeal by the House Church.

The Holy Spirit has awakened our hearts. May God bless China. Signed Henan Province. August 22, 1998.

This letter was signed by seven key House Church leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to add that with the definition of cults which

some of the authorities in China appear to have adopted, most of the churches in America would be classified as cults, because under that policy, they could not talk about such things as the end of the world, the second coming of Christ, abortion or spiritual warfare.

I would appeal to the government authorities in China to deal with believers prudently and cautiously, to treat them with dignity and respect. I would remind them it is those countries that recognize the importance of religious liberty and treat it as a fundamental human right which are the most stable societies in the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take the time previously allotted to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

#### THE NEED FOR FURTHER EDUCATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. SANCHEZ) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. SANCHEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to talk a little bit about school construction, since many of my colleagues are doing that tonight, and I would like to say that I think I have the most experience in this House with respect to school construction.

How many of my colleagues can say that they have constructed six classrooms for the Solvang Elementary School District and redid the bathrooms for the little girls and little boys in that school? Or how many of my colleagues can say they found the money to build a \$64 million state-of-the-art tech high school in Antioch, California. Or how many of you can say that you have issued COPs or gone before Standard & Poors or Moody's to get ratings for any of these school districts? Well, I can say that. I can actually say that I have helped build probably over 30 schools in the State of California. Therefore, I think I understand pretty well what happens with the financing equation of school construction.

Let me tell you that the relationship in the State of California, my state, is that of local and state for school construction. In fact, what used to happen was initially, in the beginning, local